

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8326

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SUBJECT: SOVIET VIEWS ON KOREA

REF: MOSCOW 4325

1. SUMMARY: PRAVDA COMMENTARY STATES, MORE EXPLICITLY THAN USUAL, SOVIET VIEWS ON NORTH KOREAN PROPOSALS FOR REUNIFICATION. MOSCOW CLEARLY VIEWS EARLY REUNIFICATION AS UNDESIRABLE AND DEFINES DPRK CONFEDERATION PROPOSAL IN WAY WHICH MINIMIZES ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND ITS APPLICABILITY TO OTHER DIVIDED-NATION SITUATIONS, SUCH AS GERMANY. END SUMMARY

2. COMMENTARY BY B. GRACHEV IN APRIL 25 PRAVDA EXPRESSES, MORE CLEARLY THAN ANY OTHER RECENT SOVIET DISCUSSION, MOSCOW'S ATTITUDES RE KOREAN REUNIFICATION. KEYED TO DPRK PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY MESSAGE TO PARLIAMENTS AND GOVERNMENTS OF WORLD ON PYONGYANG'S REUNIFICATION PROPOSAL, IT EMPHASIZES COMPLEXITY OF NORMALIZATION AND REUNIFICATION IN LIGHT OF KOREAN WAR AND LENGTHY SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT OF TWO KOREAS ALONG

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DIFFERENT PATHS.

3. GRACHEV APPROVES TRENDS TOWARD NORMALIZATION BUT REFERS CAUTIOUSLY TO JULY 4 JOINT STATEMENT AS PERMITTING TWO SIDES TO " BRING THIER POSITIONS CLOSER," IMPROVE ATMOSPHERICS AND REDUCE TENSIONS. " IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES," HE NOTES, " UNIFICATION IS COMPLEX PROCESS WHICH NATURALLY CANNOT BE CARRIED OUT BY RAPID MEASURES; IT REQUIRES LONG PERIOD OF TIME, PERSISTENT EFFORT AND IMAGINATIVE SOLUTIONS." ESSENTIAL PRECONDITION, MOREOVER, IS TREND TOWARD DEMOCRATIZATION IN SOUTH, WOUTH NOT PRESENT. " AT SAME TIME," HE WARNS, " THERE CAN BE OF COURSE NO TALK OF WEAKENING POSITIONS OF SOCIALISM IN NORTH OR ANY CONCESSIONS OF PRINCIPLE REGARDING SOCIALIST STRUCTURE DPRK."

4. IN HIS VIEW, PYONGYANG' S CONFEDERATION PROPOSAL ASSUMES CONTINUED SOCIAL- ECONOMIC COMPETITION BETWEEN TWO SYSTEMS WHILE CREATING COMMON INSTITUTIONS FOR COOLERATION IN VARIOUD FIELDS. GRACHEV FINDS NORTH- SOUTH TALKS " AT DEAD END" AND EVEN LIMITED MOVES TOWARD NORMALIZATION TO BE FRUSTRATED BY POLICIES OF PARK REGIME. HE CHARGES ROKG WITH EXPLOITING DESIRES OF KOREAN PEOPLE FOR REUNIFICATION IN ORDER STRENGTHEN ITS OWN POSITION.

5. COMMENT: AS SOVIET VIEW EMERGES, REUNIFICATION ANY TIME SOON IS PRACTICAL IMPOSSIBILITY AND IDEOLOGICAL RISK. EVEN SYMBOLIC CONFEDERATION FORMULA NOT EXPLICITLY ENDORSED, PROBABLY BECAUSE OF SENSITIVITY RE ITS APPLICABILITY TO GERMANY. REITERATION OF SOVIET DEMAND FOR WITHDRAWAL US TROOPS AND ABOLITION UNCURK SUGGESTS SOVIET DESIRE OBTAIN POLITICAL BENEFITS FROM ANY MOVE TOWARD UNITY. IT IMPLIES ASSESSMENT THAT RESULT WOULD NOT DESTABILIZE KOREA.
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